

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Substitute drawings for Figures 13 and 14 are submitted herewith which properly recite the term "Binarizing".

The specification is amended by the present response to correct the informalities noted in paragraph 2 in the present specification.

Claim 5 is amended by the present response to address the objection noted in paragraph 4 of the Office Action.

The present response amends the claims to present subject matter indicated as allowable in the outstanding Office Action. More particularly, in the outstanding Office Action claims 1, 3, 7, 8, 9, 17, 19, 23, 24, 25, and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. patent 6,360,006 B1 to Wang. Claims 4 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Wang. Claims 5, 6, 21, and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Wang as applied to claim 3, in combination with U.S. patent 5,331,442 to Sorimachi. Claims 2, 18, and 31 were objected to as dependent upon rejected base claims, but were noted as allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of their base claims and any intervening claims. Claims 10-16, 26-29 and 32 were allowed.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication of the allowable subject matter and allowance of claims 2, 10-16, 26-29, 31 and 32. With respect to that indication of allowable subject matter claim 1 is amended by the present response to now incorporate the limitations of previously pending dependent claim 2, claim 17 is amended by the present response to now incorporate the limitations of previously pending dependent claim 18, and claim 30 is amended by the present response to now incorporate the limitations of previously pending dependent claim 31. Thus, each of amended independent claims 1, 17, and 30 recite subject

matter indicated as allowable in the outstanding Office Action. The other pending claims 10-16, 26-29, and 32 are allowed.

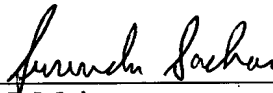
In such ways, each of the pending claims is believed to recite subject matter indicated as allowable in the outstanding Office Action.

Further, the claims are amended by the present response to make minor clarifications by not referring to any "steps". That claim amendments are not believed to narrow the claims in any aspect.

As no other issues are pending in this application, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully requested that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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